

THEOSOPHY IN ACTION



Quarterly Official Organ of The Theosophical Society in Europe—Federation of National Societies

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The Christ Indwelling

PROFFERED THOUGHTS BY
GEOFFREY HODSON

The Gospel according to St. John opens its account of the life of the Lord Christ with an affirmation of the existence of a universal, cosmic Power and Presence of which every human being consists or is composed. This harmonises with the teaching of Theosophy that the whole Essence of the universe, the *Paramatma*, is manifested as the innermost Self of man, the *Atma*, and not as two Principles but one.

Jesus Himself said: "... I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you." St. Paul affirmed: "Christ in you, the hope of glory" and: "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you." H. P. Blavatsky wrote: "... One and Supreme, the unborn and the inexhaustible source of every emanation, the fountain of life and light eternal, a Ray of which every one of us carries in him on this earth."

Admittedly, these are very lofty ideas, difficult of comprehension, and still more so of realization as an experience in consciousness, for apparently the Christ-nature in man may not be contacted by thought alone. One cannot, as is our custom as human beings, *think* one's way into the interior divine Presence, the Christ Indwelling. Rather must it be experienced supramentally in mental stillness, thereafter to become part of one's life. Thus viewed, the Lord Christ is far more than a historical Person or Personage alone, but also and far more, the ever-present Christ Principle, the universal Spirit-Essence, innate in each and every human being.

The Atonement may presumably be regarded as an interior procedure, an at-one-ment or conscious self-unification of the Lord Christ with the spiritual Selves of all mankind, and a consequent transmission of light rather than a transfer of blood from the wounds of the Christ as His body is said to have died upon the Cross. Again one's thoughts are led to the Christ Indwelling, the interior Christ Principle in every human being, the "Christ in you" to which Our Lord referred in His words, already quoted: "I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you." May it not also be assumed that His last words to His disciples in Galilee before His Ascension: "... lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" refer not only to the historical Jesus, but more—perhaps wholly—to the fact that as the Christ Principle within, pure and perfect Wisdom and Love, He is indeed ever with us throughout eternity?

Out of His divine and perfect love, as the ever-living Christ, the Great Teacher of the human Race, we may be assured, regards all beings as a mother loves an only child, and that His concern for all His overshadowing love and protection and help for all humanity, will never cease, never ebb but ever flow, never decline, but be always at its maximum. Indeed, He, the Great Lord of Love, will not depart from Earth until every human being reaches Christhood, or is "safe" or "saved." By His at-one-ment He shares His own perfected light and life with all mankind thereby hastening the mystic "birth" and the ultimate attainment of "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" or symbolic Ascension to the right hand of God.

I close with a quotation from the German mystic, Angelus Silesius:

(Continued at foot of next column)

Modern Theosophy

EXTRACTS FROM A SYMPOSIUM AT ST. ANDREWS

MISS E. ASHTON:

The work of our Society is always to be seen in relation to humanity, and as humanity grows and changes so the presentation of Theosophy, which is Truth, must change to meet its needs. But before the presentation can change, our understanding of it must deepen, for Truth itself is changeless.

It is an accepted occult axiom that the universe is worked from within outwards. I feel that we should regard Adyar as the centre from which the spiritual life wells up and radiates throughout the field. The international President at any one time is the vehicle at the human level through which the life passes, giving that life a special colour and quality suited to the needs of the work and the times.

We should look to Sri Ram for the keynote for today and tomorrow in the quality of the new and deeper understanding to be found in his talks and writings. The note he brings and which fills him as a person is the fragrance of *buddhi*. He brings before us a view of the work to be done in terms of the unveiling, the liberating of something eternal, constant, the beautiful unspoiled nature within us. He stresses the qualities which are born when the *buddhic* light begins to shine: *Simplicity*, which reduces everything to its essential values.

Freshness, which arises from living in the present, unspoiled by the conditioning and distorting of memory. It requires the renunciation of everything to which we cling.

Truth, the truth related to living, not intellectual truth. For him, truth and beauty are two aspects of the same thing.

Therefore the Theosophy we offer to humanity needs to be re-expressed in terms of the feeling-knowledge of the intuitive mind.

The literature that is attracting most attention today is the range which offers a way to experience deeper than the mind: Zen, meditation, Mahayana Buddhism, the philosophy of Krishnamurti, and the teachings of Sri Ramana, the sage of Arunachala.

Sri Ram says: "We should be heralds of a new age which will witness a new culture different from what obtains at present. That was the hope with which the theosophical movement was ushered into existence... The whole aim of the Society is to bring about a fundamental change in man's life and outlook. The nature of this change has to be realised by us and conveyed to the world at large."

MRS. N.V.D. SCHOOT:

Theosophy = divine wisdom, God wisdom. As there is no time in the world of

"Though Christ a thousand times in Bethlehem be born
And not within thyself, thy soul will be forlorn.
The Cross on Golgotha thou lookest to in vain
Unless, within thyself, it be set up again."

¹ Jn. 1:1. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

⁴ "In Him was life; and the life as the light of men."

¹⁴ "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us..."

² Jn. 8:58. "Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am."

³ Jn. 14:20.
⁵ Col. 1:27.
⁶ Gal. 4:19.
⁷ S.D. 3:341.
⁸ Matt. 28:20.
⁹ Jn. 8:11, 13:1, etc.
¹⁰ Eph. 4:13.

the 'Gods' it is better to speak of ageless wisdom, rather than of ancient wisdom and modern theosophy.

What we can do is to speak of an ancient and a modern interpretation of that ageless wisdom given to us by the Masters H. P. Blavatsky and others. Besides the textbooks of Theosophy, *Isis Unveiled*, *The Secret Doctrine*, *The Key to Theosophy*, we have our three Objects, but these are no longer the privilege of the Theosophical Society. The first has already been written into the Preamble of the United Nations; the second is far better done in High Schools and Universities; the third is the field of experience of youth and science. In her time H. P. Blavatsky compared the science of her days with the outlines of Theosophy. Are we doing the same? There are many books written in the outer world that come very near to our Theosophy (Jung, Neumann, Fromm). Youth today asks for our own experience, not for repetition of what we have read in books.

The old meaning of Theosophy was 'that from the other side', the non-material world, and science is aware that there must be a source of sources. We must work again with our textbooks, the most important material given us by the Masters of the Wisdom, and with our three Objects: brotherhood (I prefer the word friendship to brotherhood), try to understand man through our second object, and ourselves through our third.

Then we can help mankind break through the crust of selfishness to a wider evolution, by being ourselves in pace, with, or better ahead of, the times in which we are living. Perhaps then our modern Theosophy of today will be called a very important aspect of the ageless wisdom.

MRS. K. PERKINS:

If we look about us we see evidence of dissatisfaction with the values of present day society: in religion a questioning not only of creeds and dogmas but even of the concept of God. Man's relationship to man and nature is having the strong light of public awareness played upon it. Even scientific discoveries and technological advances are being re-evaluated in terms of ethical and ecological implications.

Theosophy is particularly relevant to the present times, as it points to the wholeness of individual consciousness and the unity of Life. Theosophy does not separate man's spiritual life from his everyday life, but rather links his realisation of truth, beauty and goodness with his action in thought, feeling and physical action as well as action in depth, that is to say, free, spontaneous action 'now'. The ageless wisdom is not a way of escape from life and its problems, but it does enable an individual to face himself, his problems and his relationships to the world around him.

Light on the Path might have been written for this day when it advises us to: 'Inquire of the earth, the air and the water the secrets they hold for you. Inquire of the Holy Ones of the earth the secrets they hold for you. Inquire of the Inmost, the One of its final secret which it holds for you through the ages.'

As we seek to penetrate into the secrets of life in all their beauty we must also remember that *Light on the Path* tells us not to 'fancy you can stand aside from the bad man or the foolish man. They are yourself, though in less degree than your friend or your Master.'

Some Thoughts on Silence

BY SIGVALDI HJALMARSSON

What is silence?

I do not mean that superficial kind of silence, when there is not a sound to be heard.

There exists a kind of silence so intense, so immensely powerful that even great roars cannot disturb it. They are drowned in it. This silence is so profound that it makes any kind of noise seem utterly insignificant.

That kind of silence is not non-talking or non-acting. It does not lie in anything you do or do not do. It lies in what you are. It is the complete absence of ego-consciousness, of I-ness.

If there is no ego, no noisy "I" within you, then you yourself and anything else become like the blue, serene sky.

This may constitute a mystical experience of a high order, but we all have had a certain touch of that silence, that experience, because it is our true essence, the very stuff we are made of.

Perhaps we don't pay any attention to it as it is so noiseless, so simple, so direct.

We are trained to observe things that are noisy and complicated. Therefore, anything that is direct, simple, straightforward, tends to escape our attention.

When you become completely absorbed in whatever you may be doing, the significance of the present moment grows enormous. There is virtually no past, no future, no external world, no "I." You are nothing but attention, silent and alert. Not someone who pays attention, you are nothing but pure attention.

This is the beginning of or the entrance to what is usually called mystical experience. The silence within is what is aimed at in meditation, and when you are able to stay in this condition at will, formal meditation becomes unnecessary or even harmful because it causes strain. Everything you do is then a meditation.

In complete attention there is no sense of "I" or "mine," the ego-centric attitude disappears. You no longer do the work, it is done by you, and you are the observer watching the work being done by you.

When you are able to keep your mind still for some time you develop a fresh understanding of the process of thinking.

Thoughts may still appear in the silent mind, like stray birds soaring across the sky, but they do not disturb the inner serenity.

While in the silence, your thinking apparatus may be observed like, for instance, your hand.

You are not your hand.

You are not your thinking apparatus.

You may use your hand, and you may use your thinking apparatus. But while you are *not* using your thinking apparatus, it should be still as your hand should be still when you are not actually making use of it.

Then you discover that you can also think with a still mind. Even while the thinking goes on, the mind rests calm.

Normally we identify thinking with the thought-process which is not at all the same thing, as we find out when we look at it more closely.

If you watch your thinking habits from a close range, you discover that essentially the act of thinking is a conscious act, very similar to the act of seeing.

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THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
IN EUROPE

FEDERATION OF NATIONAL SOCIETIES
Theosophy in Action

THINKING PERSONS IN COUNTRIES WHERE opinion can be reasonably expressed are apt to be appalled at what they consider modern violence; not just insane or criminal violence in the ordinary sense, but violence as a policy, as a deliberate means of attaining certain ends. Such ends may be personal, as in robbing a bank or an office to get money; political, as with most hijackings, kidnappings and some student riots, and of course war; or perhaps ideological, religious or idealistic, where passions are inflamed by real or imaginary grievances or causes and reason is swamped by emotion. We tend to get these methods out of perspective because tactics and techniques nowadays sometimes make them more speedily successful than they used to be.

But violence is nothing new either as a policy or as tactics. The records of almost all nations show fairly constant turmoil and fighting, both within nations and between them; the stronger imposing its will upon the weaker, and then rebellion to try to reverse the position. This need not surprise us. In the first of the *Mahatma Letters* we read: 'We know something of human nature, for the experience of long... ages has taught us,' and 'Human nature in general is the same now as it was a million years ago.' In our stage of evolution we are said to have the task of developing mind, an objective to be reached in a long-distant future. It is everywhere apparent that only the very few act from the mental level; most of mankind live in crowd or herd emotions and are swayed by prejudice, intolerance and extremism of every kind. The change to full mental control can be looked for in the next round of our evolution. There is some foreshadowing of this even now, for the various stages widely overlap. Letter 14 says: 'Fifth round men have been coming in for the last few thousand years,' but they are the very few.

No civilization can exist without a great measure of law and order. Violent action within the community may achieve the wishes of its instigators and participants by a sort of blackmailing of the forces of order. But there must be a limit to such blackmail if social chaos is to be avoided. Here we face a real problem. Apart from those set on subversion for selfish ends, which could be fairly classed as crime, consider this question: If it becomes impossible for genuine points of view of grievances to be aired and seriously considered, is the use of force then morally permissible? If the Establishment is so entrenched, so rigid and uncompromising that no evolution can take place, should revolution then be employed? Historically the answer has always been 'Yes.' The revolts have failed much more often than succeeded; the reactionary power is then reinforced and possibility of change becomes more remote still. Even when successful, rebellion or revolution tend to be immoderate—a swing from one evil to another—and in any case violence begets violence. This is no true solution.

No man is an island, least of all a Theosophist. He must be concerned with his own group or nation as well as with mankind. What is his duty as a citizen and also as one pledged to do what he can to help his fellows and to remedy injustice? And what does he do when these duties conflict, as often they must? We do not all have to face such tremendous decisions, but we shall be all the better for giving deep thought to the dilemma and trying to find our personal answer to these testing questions.

From the Chairman

Dear Members,

When we approach Christmas, the feast of the birth of Christ, something stirs in us which often slumbers deeply within us during the year: that love which is selfless, and ready to make sacrifices. Perhaps the dark days which precede the feast help to achieve the break-through. They invite mankind to reflect, to come to his senses. For us theosophists this feast means much more. It arouses in us the possibility of growing out of our smaller selves, of subordinating our personality to the Self, of obeying our inner voice.

It is the time when we turn more towards our neighbour, give him our sympathy in greater measure and seek to make him happy. When we think of the theme of the next Congress, 'Man's Inner Resources,' it seems that our task also includes helping to open out in others such possibilities as will make the world a little less dark.

Within ourselves there are springs which we must stir into activity, until, with their clear waters, they flood our whole being and cleanse our personality from all egoism. If we utilize these days to direct our attention more inwards, listen more closely to the 'voice of the silence' and obey it, then we shall also hear distinctly the voice of the world, which thirsts for these waters. Let us quench this thirst so far as we are able, but let us distribute the healing balm wisely, not too much and not too little, according to what seems best for the individual.

Theosophy is needed more than ever, and also sought, but not under the name of Theosophy. It is a source of great happiness to us that it is our destiny, as members of the Theosophical Society to serve this high ideal. Let us help with our knowledge and our faith in the healing power of the Ancient Wisdom, by obeying its principles and living them, to overcome this critical period in the history of the world, to penetrate the darkness with its light, to help the light in the hearts of men to break through.

If we celebrate the feast of love and charity in this way, then it will be a blessing to ourselves and our neighbours.

From my heart I wish you a blessed Christmas and a happy new year.

CLAIRE WYSS

95th ANNUAL CONVENTION, ADYAR

The International Convention will be held, as usual, from 26th to 31st December at Adyar. Delegates from all the Continents are expected, so that the gathering will be truly international.

The programme will include lectures by the President, the Vice-President, Srimati Rukmini Arundale, and delegates from abroad. There will be an afternoon reception under the banyan tree, symposia and discussion meetings.

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Our thinking goes on very much in this manner:

We see something, and immediately we start dreaming about what we have seen. We interrupt the act of seeing or being aware—and afterwards we confuse the dreaming with the real act of thinking.

When you observe the way thoughts come into existence, you cannot escape noticing that they are not specially created or moulded out of some kind of mental consciousness.

Thoughts do not cause awareness. Awareness comes first and then the thought.

In every single thought there is a flash or a spark of pure consciousness. It is the flash which is the origin and reality of the thought. You see something, you become conscious of it, and afterwards the thought-image comes into existence as a kind of personal reaction to the flash.

The flash is outside of time. The thought-image has a duration in time.

From the Vice-President

The visit of several Summer Schools in Europe by Mrs. Perkins and myself began in early July at Hustedt, where the German Section provided excellent physical facilities and a well arranged programme. Under the fine management of Mrs. Annaliese Stephan, our English language limitation seemed no barrier to communication.

Immediately following this was the International Week at Huizen, in which Rukmini Devi graciously invited us to participate. The programme was preceded by an impressive Inauguration of the new Besant Hall, a splendidly designed modern building.

After several days in Copenhagen, we arrived at Gammel Praestegaard for the Scandinavian Summer School, attended by members from the surrounding Sections. Many of these were Young Theosophists, including the General Secretary, Mr. Sørensen. He, as well as others, proceeded at once to Edinburgh and St. Andrew's in Scotland, where a large group of members from various Sections were gathered for the English-speaking Summer School. The well-filled programme of lectures and discussions, organized by Mr. and Mrs. V. W. Slater, was presented in the Physics Building, where facilities were available for every kind of audio-visual presentation.

On our way to France, a stop-over visit in London afforded opportunities for conferences and other matters requiring attention.

Aussois, a village in the magnificent French Alps, was chosen by Dr. Thorin and his co-workers as locale for the Pays-Latins Summer School. In addition to members of the French Section, we were especially pleased to greet friends from Portugal, as well as Italy, Belgium, Switzerland and other countries. As with the other Schools, the programme extended for a week.

Before commencing the Swiss tour, we enjoyed a brief holiday in Ascona, a quaint little town on Lake Maggiore. Here we visited members and friends and were presented at a members' meeting in nearby Locarno.

Lectures in Basle and Geneva followed. In each city our way was made easy and very pleasant by the thoughtful arrangements provided by the Chairman of the Council of the European Federation, Mrs. Claire Wyss, and the Swiss General Secretary, Miss Mary Anderson, and Mr. and Mrs. Tripet.

A lecture was scheduled in Milan, Italy, by Professor del Sere for us en route to the Austrian Section. There we visited Vienna, Linz and Graz. This concluding engagement of our three-months' tour became a memorable episode indeed, as organized by Dr. Lauppert and his colleagues with the assistance of Mr. Hammer, Mr. Schlieffler and Professor Karl Schmid, our translator and aide-de-camp, together with the many other members who were so gracious in meeting all needs.

From Austria, we returned immediately to Adyar, happy with the many contacts and generous kindnesses shown everywhere by the European workers of our Society.

J.S.P.

The Value of Membership

SUMMARY OF AN INFORMAL TALK GIVEN TO THE LONDON FEDERATION OF LODGES IN SEPTEMBER BY SRIMATI RUKMINI ARUNDALE

Having completed fifty years of membership, I look back to the time when I joined. I asked Dr. Besant whether it was necessary to be a member of the Society to be a good theosophist, and her answer was emphatically Yes, because it is only after joining that one learns how to be a theosophist. We are linked in a marvelous way to a worldwide organization which has great potentialities if we can live and work together according to our ideals.

There is far more in Theosophy than that part in which we believe when we join the Society. Experience of a finer and more refined nature comes to us through living the life of Theosophy, and we can prove to ourselves that we draw the inspiration for this from the Society, although we cannot prove this to anyone else. All the great truths have to be lived and tried before they become a reality to oneself. No knowledge can be known from the outside, it can only be experienced from within.

First, then, there is the understanding of Theosophy, which must ever grow as we advance in years.

Second, there is its creative expression, which is service. This must come as an urge from within. As an example we can think of Dr. Besant who was a theosophist at heart before she became a member of the Society, but once she had joined she was inspired to do so very much more for many more people.

When I joined the Society in 1920 the world was in turmoil, and since then the turmoil has grown greater in every sphere. Against this one must set the greater exchange of ideas between India and the west, especially in the realm of the arts. The interest in Europe and America in yoga and Indian art is perhaps not always on the highest level, but on the whole it is good.

The Sages of old had so closely connected the cultural life of India through philosophy, art in all its forms, the crafts, etc., that many from elsewhere came to live there, such as the founders, and many others. It is for this reason that in the Besant Theosophical School we seek to perpetuate this culture through combining general education with all forms of art. Art trains the emotions, and these must become sensitive and mature if the trained mind is to be of use. Art is the creative physical expression of the spiritual side of our natures and an aspect of Truth.

Members of the Society sometimes complain that people do not understand us, but theosophists must train themselves to understand people and life if they are to make their proper contribution to the world.

The harmony of our natures can never be complete unless we cease to exploit the animal kingdom. If human beings are to grow in stature and combine in friendship and brotherhood it is most important that we protect animals and treat them with respect. Above all, we need to develop a great sense of unity with, and reverence for, all life. In treating animals without cruelty and in educating the young to do so, we ourselves grow in compassion and understanding.

Modern education is by example. What matters most is what we are, and if we practise absolute sincerity, selflessness and purity, we shall set the right example. A feature of this present cycle, the Kali Yuga, is action, and action is the love which expresses itself in such a way that it brings happiness to others.

The world is our country, and as theosophists we should see ourselves as inhabiting a house with all the windows and doors open. Ideas should flow in from all sides, whilst we retain our own individuality, and give ourselves to the world.

SUMMER SCHOOLS

Sweden: 4th to 10th July, 1971.
European Congress, Paris, 8th to 15th August, 1971 (Theme: Man's Inner Resources).

The Indirect Way

SUMMARY OF A LECTURE AT THE
SUMMER SCHOOL IN ST. ANDREWS
BY CURT BERG

When doing the ordinary things in our lives, like doing the job connected with the earning of our living, making the necessary preparations for a journey, going shopping, etc., the procedure is something like this: We set up a goal for what we are going to do and use our mind to find the necessary means and ways of reaching that goal. The important point in this connection is that we have defined our goal and are directing our efforts towards the goal, knowing the way step by step.

We can also say that we start from the known, we may have to use our imagination, but we use elements from the known, and the result is still within the field of the known.

When it comes to other things in life, like the question of happiness or peace of mind, things are different. If we put them up as our goal, if we strive to reach them, they will ever escape us. They can come only as a by-product, as it were, when our aim is not that of happiness or peace within, but when our actions have some other goal.

We are aware that not any kind of action or goal will do for this 'by-product' of happiness to emerge; often we are very uncertain about what the requirements are. But even when we know that, we cannot lay down a direct road. I think something of the same applies to spiritual development or self-realization.

It is of no use to try to *imagine* what that self-realization will be and try to build a way to it by using what is known to us, because it does not belong to the field of the known, and the way is not built by using the bricks of the known. It has to come as a 'by-product.'

There is a passage in *Light on the Path*, which points in the same direction. It says:

"Grow as the flower grows, unconsciously, but eagerly anxious to open its soul to the air. So must you press forward to open your soul to the Eternal. But it must be the Eternal that draws forth your strength and beauty, not desire for growth."

This has a very profound mystical significance, and some of its deep meaning should be reflected into our approach to self-realization. This reflection, it seems, would be to find out what are the conditions in which the soul can open to the Eternal and be drawn by it, really to understand these conditions, to experience them, to apply them.

It should be noted here, that we need only to know about the conditions, expressed in terms of our present knowledge, and not a description of what the opening of the soul or self-realization itself is. If we were given such a description, we would not be able to grasp it fully, we would have to transform it and adapt it to our present level of understanding. Such a distorted picture would be of little help, rather would it be a hindrance to a truer understanding later on.

In Theosophy we have been given much information about the conditions that can lead to Self-realization. It is up to us to use it to come to an understanding and a way of our own. That information falls under two main headings:

1. The different sets of recommendations and hints which are meant to lead us towards Self-realization, towards Truth or Reality; and

2. One's relationship with his fellow-men.

As to the different sets of recommendations and hints, one important way of understanding them is to see them as a help for retuning mind and body so that we can come into a broader and deeper, a more complete contact, with the Reality in which we live.

Some of these recommendations are elementary, yet fundamental. Some of the ten commandments in Christianity are of that kind (leaving out here their historical and social connotations), for instance, those about not killing, not stealing, etc. They are of the character of not doing any harm to anybody or anything, and that is a fundamental part of the retuning of ourselves.

Another set of such recommendations is the noble eightfold path in Buddhism: right knowledge, right thought, right action, right means of livelihood, etc. They have a more positive, active form, but they also serve the purpose of helping us to come into harmony and right relationship with our environment and the world we live in.

So, such things are elementary, yet fundamental. Their aim, as I understand them, is *not* to form us according to a certain pattern of behaviour, but to tell us how to live in a way that is not a hindrance for a deeper contact with life.

Coming to more advanced recommendations, the first one to mention is what we call meditation. Hints are given on how to still the mind and how to tune in with one aspect or another of Truth, Beauty, etc., and that mostly has a good effect in itself. But if meditation is to lead to what it is meant to be, then we must pass a point where we have to leave all thoughts and all words behind, leave all the known and go into the unknown.

There is a danger that we get too much tied up by recommendations on how to still the mind etc., and we never pass the point that leads on to real inner silence. So, I think it is wise *also* to be open to other ways of coming to that inner tranquillity.

One of them is by reading, provided it is done in the right way. The sort of study I am thinking of now is reading books which have the quality of conveying a profound and broad picture of Man and the Universe and which are written in a way as to evoke something beyond the words in the depth of the reader. If and when that happens with us, we should stop reading, be still within, let the hidden process work and not try to verbalise it too soon. In that way we have come to something of the same inner silence as that which meditation can give. We follow the road of reading up to a certain point, then we leave it and go into the unknown.

There is another road also, which is the road of just being still in any moment of life, to be still and observe, watch what happens; to hold back judgment, comparison, thoughts of any kind, and just see.

This is especially important in our relations with people we meet. Most of us very often meet other people with our inner reactions, with a preconceived idea about that man or that type of man, or with expectations, or with fear, or with associations to some other man, or some other situation, or we make comparisons of different kinds. That is to say that we do not perceive so much of the man we meet; what we perceive is a picture of him that has been formed and coloured very much according to the contents of our own consciousness. If we watch ourselves, we shall find that almost always there is such an element in our meeting with a fellow-man. Then we have not met the real man, not seen truth, reality, on this point in life.

But there is the possibility for each of us to see the real man, at least to a larger extent than is usually the case. There is the possibility just to be quiet inwardly, open to the man in front of us, with no attitude of defence or guard, to meet the other man quietly and without reactions in our own consciousness and perceive something of his being in ourselves.

I have been talking about different sets of recommendations which all have the character of auxiliary means. I think this could be summed up in a simile which is given by Dr. L. J. Bendit in his book *Self-knowledge, a Yoga for the West*. A pilot is going to take off from an airport and he has just started his aeroplane from one end of the runway. His aim, however, is not that of reaching the other end of the runway. His aim is to use the runway as a means for taking-off. And he must know the exact moment of doing it, knowing how long he is going to use the auxiliary means and when to leave it for the real purpose. It is the same with those different ways which have been recommended to us for Self-realisation and liberation, we must know when to loose ourselves from the recommendations and find each of us his own way, we must know when we can be carried by our own wings.

In Perspective

A MODERN commentator recently wrote: 'One does not agree with prophets and preachers; one either reveres them or rejects them.' One cannot of course argue with them; they are not subject to reason or reasonableness. They are fanatically sure they are right, and they are not open to any influence that might cause them to modify their opinion.

Here is one cause of the intractable problems that beset humanity. For the unarguable-with fanatics are legion: the dedicated bigots of religion—any religion; those obsessed by ideology; men possessed of a panacea compounded in their own imagination; others possessed by the spirit of feuds that should long ago have been forgotten, but instead are carefully fostered and artificially injected with new hate, more bitter and vicious even than the original; and perhaps those young people who reject society and turn their backs on responsibility. Many of these seek to pull the community to pieces, but have no notion of putting the bits together in any new shape or of building some other form of society. Great indeed is the need for the tolerance that a little knowledge ought (but alas sometimes fails) to engender in those who meet it. Oh for the golden mean, the Middle Way! But we need not despair. Hope should lie in the ancient saying 'A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump,' though when the lump is mankind the very little leaven takes a long time to work.

Power Complex

In olden times there were, at different periods, great empires that held sway over what, in days of slow and hazardous communications, were vast areas of the earth. Their successors are the Great Powers of the modern era. A State that is militarily strong, economically important and strategically placed geographically arrogates to itself the right to carry out its policy anywhere in the world, subject only to being checked by another Great Power bent on the same ends. Either there is war, to determine limits, or a policy of sharing out the earth in 'spheres of influence,' in much the same way as some wild animals arrange their territorial boundaries.

The mighty have probably always mastered the weak. It is but the extension of what has happened within various groups. Individual men, if strong enough, and groups have imposed their will on the bulk of the people. This is the expression of one of the less pleasant aspects of human nature — the urge to exercise power over one's fellows. Though in few lands are men now physical slaves, yet most are slaves politically or economically, in subjection to some extent to powerful men or to systems. Is not, perhaps, the widespread revolt of the most divergent groups of people rebelling against the present order of society, to be seen as a movement for freedom, for release from age-old servitude? Masters formerly dominated men, and the community. Now, the pendulum has swung back; small groups of workers can dominate employers and can disrupt normal life in the community. Here is a further form of the power complex, another kind of slavery from which men must get free.

So, we can follow our knowledge and the hints from others up to a certain point only; about what happens after that we cannot and we should not form any ideas, we should just experience it.

Now, coming to the second point I intend to comment upon: our relationships with our fellow men.

There is this sentence in H. P. Blavatsky's *The Voice of the Silence*:

"To live to benefit mankind is the first step."

I think it is important to note that it says the *first* step, not as we might suppose the last step.

This means that the whole of our way towards Self-realisation has to be in the atmosphere of ourselves being a part of the whole, including mankind and all the lower kingdoms. And we have to be a part which is not only not doing harm but also a part which is beneficent to the whole.

Why is that so? I think it lies in what

Only a sense of responsibility all round can bring a satisfactory outcome.

The Political Scene

The world political scene is shifting again. Changes are showing in many parts of the world, some of which could have profound effects: Europe and the Common Market; the United States, war and internal ferment; Rhodesia, South Africa and the independent African States; the wide expansion of Japanese trade; the Middle East; and so on. Possibly the move that could be most far-reaching is the increasing recognition of Mao's China and its relationship with the United Nations. There is ample scope for many surprises during the last quarter of the century.

Divine Wisdom

H. P. Blavatsky asserted that Theosophy is synonymous with Everlasting Truth (*The Key*). Since Truth has for thousands of years defied definition, so has Theosophy never had any 'officially approved consensus defining it' (N. Sri Ram). Our International President adds: 'Theosophy goes far beyond mere book learning and is meant to be a matter of individual realization . . . Theosophy is not mere mental knowledge, but literally the Divine Wisdom.' Nevertheless, we have many theosophical 'teachings,' doctrines of the Esoteric Philosophy, etc. No Theosophist would deny the immense value of these. The danger in propounding them is that they tend, in Mr. Sri Ram's words, to 'create a stereotype meant to be accepted by all, even if it is not imposed on them.' Where, then, do we stand, and where do we go from here?

It is not really so difficult. H.P.B. talked of certain 'Eternal Verities,' which 'receive constantly further corroboration.' Thus anything that can be established as Universal Law must be listed as an eternal verity, and therefore included in Theosophy. Some points of the Esoteric Philosophy that were scorned by orthodox scientists and theologians in the 1880s are now accepted as facts of Nature; others are supported by evidence that renders them highly probable; others are echoed or approached by thinkers in various spheres. H.P.B.'s method was to support the ideas she put forth by quoting enlightened authors of her time or by showing how illogical or biased were contrary opinions. The same method will serve us well.

Theosophical propositions did not begin with H.P.B. or her Teachers. They are to be found in ancient writings. The test of a theory or a doctrine is not who propounded it, but whether it is true. That is the only criterion. Modern knowledge testifies to some truths, our intuitive apprehension to others. We can be sure of some fundamentals and hold the rest of the teaching as possible, probable or not yet proven to us; it is not likely that we shall find ourselves disproving anything of consequence.

Yet whatever eternal verities we can confirm to our own mental satisfaction, we need to heed above all what Mr. Sri Ram has put thus: 'People read books, take a few ideas from them, and then say they have learned Theosophy. But that may be merely the husk that covers the' (Continued at foot of page 4, col. 4)

is said in the *Bhagavad Gita*:

"There is only one Self in the Universe. That Self is the Self in all."

So, coming to our own true Self is to come to the Self of all, and our wandering towards the Truth and towards Self-realisation must be true to this all the way.

I should like to put before you the simile of a well. What is a well? It is a place where there is water, but the well has not created the water. A well is only a place where the water, which is everywhere in the depth of the ground, can pierce through and come to the surface for the benefit of man.

That is the way we should look at ourselves and our fellow-men.

Eternal wisdom, truth and beauty is everywhere in nature and in each of us, in our depth. We should try to become a place where that eternal truth and beauty can come forth for the benefit of all, and we should help others, as we can, to become such a well.

EXTRACT FROM THE CLOSING ADDRESS TO THE SUMMER SCHOOL AT ST. ANDREWS

By J. S. PERKINS

The most wonderful organisation in the world is the Theosophical Society. The grand structure of knowledge which H. P. Blavatsky left has now reached millions of people. H. P. Blavatsky gave Theosophy and H. S. Olcott gave the Theosophical Society to the world, but the membership have sustained the Society for nearly a century.

Over a century ago the Adepts saw that the trends of humanity were on a collision course in the 20th century and decided to institute a counter force and to collect a nucleus of people who recognise the unity of humanity without any distinctions.

Everyone who enters the Society is challenged to stand before the world with the ideal of universal brotherhood, and to look steadily in the direction of truth without compromise.

The headquarters of the Society are in India because India stands at the crossroads between east and west, and because it represents the most ancient culture in the world. The fifth root race is going towards its culmination, as the influence of the sixth subrace begins to show itself all over the world.

The Theosophical Society represents a golden thread of unity through all the nations where it has members, each one a centre channelling forces which are immeasurable, and are silently and invisibly changing the world. The wonderful comradeship of the theosophical family throughout the world is a preparation for the same extensive service which will be demanded of us in the sixth root race.

We know that with the wisdom of Theosophy we can, through love, renew ourselves at any moment. Our concern is how to let the imperishable light in us shine more effectively. I wish you well in your efforts to do this during the coming year.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE PYRAMIDS AND STONEHENGE, by A. P. Sinnett. T.P.H., London. 5s.

The author tries first to prove that paranormal reading of past events is a fact and makes it possible to reconstruct the ancient history of the human race. He then presents the history of the Atlantean continent and of migrations of Atlantean Initiates to Egypt, where they built the two great Pyramids of Gizeh, as permanent Halls of Initiation and shrines for sacred talismans of power about 200,000 years ago.

Another migration took place towards the Scandinavian part of Europe which at that time contained the territory of Britain, where a colony of Initiates built Stonehenge.

The booklet has historical value as it was written in 1893, especially as many of the facts of which he wrote have now been proved by scientific research.

K. CHODKIEWICZ.

NEW 'QUEST' BOOKS

(available through T.P.H., London)

THOUGHT FORMS, Annie Besant and C. W. Leadbeater. 22s.

In this book the authors report on their observations of thought power and the forms which it creates. First published in 1901, this book is offered unobscuredly as a contribution to man's effort to understand himself.

THE TRANSFORMING MIND, Laurence J. Bendit and Phoebe D. Bendit. 18s.

The authors endeavour to show the vital importance of the mind of man, not only to himself but to the whole planet. What man does or refrains from doing will determine the fate of the Earth. Each man must change himself and, mediocre though he may seem to be, his potential is immense.

AT THE FEET OF THE MASTER, 10s.

When he was a boy Alcyone (J. Krishnamurti) wrote down the precepts for right living contained in this small book. The work has been a source of inspiration and guidance for thousands of people in many lands.

The Ancient Wisdom

EXTRACTS FROM A SYMPOSIUM AT ST. ANDREWS

Miss M. Anderson: Sri Ram points out in *The Ancient Wisdom from the Modern Standpoint* that the Ancient Wisdom is 'ancient not in the sense that it is antiquated; the implication rather is that it is a Wisdom which has come down from the most ancient times, being based upon an eternal truth which is unaffected by time.'

In the Three Fundamental Propositions Madame Blavatsky analyses the Ancient Wisdom into:

- (1) the ULTIMATE SOURCE of all, divine reality, expressing itself in duality;
- (2) the ENVIRONMENT of all, space, and the successive universes;
- (3) BEINGS, including MAN, as being divine and taking part in a process of evolution which will bring them back to their Source.

This summarised presentation touches all imaginable fields of knowledge, including the exact sciences as implied particularly in deeper study of the Second Proposition, our environment.

Scholars find traces of the Ancient Knowledge in archaeological remains and/or in the writings and traditions of the Chinese, Egyptians, Indians, Hebrews, Greeks, in Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, etc. It can be found further in the philosophy of Pythagoras and Plato, in Masonic, alchemist, Rosicrucian and other traditions.

It is important to note that the Ancient Wisdom has a deeper aspect. Sri Ram says: 'This Ancient Wisdom concerned itself with the nature of life, of man, of the universe as a whole and how man is related inwardly to all things around him.' If we really know the nature of something, we know the spiritual aspect of it and we should be able to find out a great deal about it. The clue to the nature of man and of the world is the deep inner relation of unity.

What is the difference between knowledge and wisdom? Vast knowledge can be acquired by the concrete mind, if it is capable and is trained, but wisdom is a characteristic of a more subtle level of man's nature and it is impossible to acquire wisdom without the development of that part.

Before we can truly understand the deep meaning behind all phenomena, that vehicle in us which enables us to understand it must be developed, and such development is by way of, first of all, the good life, in the deepest sense the unselfish life. As Madame Blavatsky says, the first step is to live to benefit mankind.

Miss L. Armstrong: Since the Ancient Wisdom is essentially concerned with life and form, most problems can be resolved through the application of its principles.

In truly primitive times the balance between the sexes was stable, and matriarchy appears to have been an older social form than patriarchy. Under the latter system, woman was allocated the dual role of the temptress, and a domestic piece of property, which in turn led, through frustration, to her inner powers being concentrated into one channel: sex.

THE BASIC IDEAS OF OCCULT WISDOM, Anne Kennedy Winner. 20s.

The author is a professional writer of scientific abstracts, in the field of biology. She believes that the basic ideas of Occult Wisdom, as she presents them in this book, do not run counter to the findings of present-day evolutionary science.

THE MYSTERY TEACHINGS AND CHRISTIANITY, Gerald Fraser. 16s.

The author begins by describing instances of extraordinary perception which have been experienced by many people. There is a mystery teaching running through many traditions and also to be found within the Christian Gospels, hidden in parable and allegory. The author challenges orthodox Christianity to bring about a radical change in outlook.

and childbirth. In succeeding generations this produced fear reinforced by the power of thought, which is a major cause of pain.

The exclusion of women from national affairs has led to an impoverishment of the races. Freedom for woman has now arrived, but she does not fully understand her real responsibilities and opportunities. The theosophical message is surely that she should penetrate into the light of wisdom and raise the cultural level of the civilizations so that the spiritual essence of 'Father-Mother', which is neither masculine nor feminine, is again brought to the world.

Mrs. M. Leslie-Smith: Wisdom in all its stages has three aspects: knowledge, experience and application. For example: I am told that in Japan some houses are built of paper. That is knowledge provided I accept the accuracy of my informant. If I go to Japan and live in a paper house, that is experience. If I then realize that oil-burning heaters or gas fires are especially dangerous in such houses, that is the application of knowledge and experience. As students of Theosophy we must make use of all three aspects of Wisdom in our search.

This, surely, is true study. We are apt to equate study with book learning and often envy those who are able to spend much time in reading. H.P.B. is emphatic that every worthwhile Theosophist must study. But she does not, I think, tell us exactly what she means by study. Acquiring knowledge can be only part of the work. And the material in the ancient writings is such that only very few of us can claim much of it as experience. However, since humanity is one whole, we do in a sense share the experience of those who have gone before. Their wisdom becomes our knowledge which we act on until true experience comes to us through the application of knowledge.

To share in the collective consciousness of humanity we must use the faculty of imagination—a faculty which is usually scorned for its inaccuracy but one which, rightly used, will eventually draw down into consciousness that light of inner perception or intuition, the light of *buddhi*.

The Stanzas of Dzyan and all commentaries on them describe not the thing in itself; they merely symbolize what they are intended to explain. They are as the two-dimensional blue-print of the draughtsman which the trained eye and imagination of the builder can visualize as a house.

Father-Mother spin-a-web is a graphic phrase and we can accept (but few of us can know) that it is true at levels of being entirely beyond our ken. What we can know is that it applies to all our everyday relationships here and now. The positive and negative aspects of being and the resultant weaving of material is just as true when two human beings meet. Obviously it can apply to the birth of a child. Not so obviously, it applies every time two people make a contact, whether of a transient or enduring nature. What matters in our relations with each other is that the web of communication between us is a true pattern and without distortion. Its duration in time is of no consequence provided it helps to fill all those time spaces of our existence with that which is a reflection of the Enduring Truth, the Ancient Wisdom, which is the goal of completion.

LIGHT ON THE PATH, Mabel Collins. 10s.

Written in the form of brief aphorisms, with commentaries and notes, this work offers valuable guidance and instruction to those who aspire to tread the path of spiritual unfoldment.

THE VOICES OF THE SILENCE, H. P. Blavatsky. 10s.

This book contains fragments of teaching from an ancient manuscript. The *Book of the Golden Precepts*, translated and annotated by H. P. Blavatsky. Its timeless message is expressed in poetic beauty of language and imagery.

PAYS LATINS SUMMER SCHOOL (in French)

ANNEXES, SAVOY, 27th AUG. - 30th SEPT.

The summer school programme was completely improvised—but this typically French improvisation was a success. Improvisation does not necessarily mean anarchy or incoherence. At 9 a.m. a meditation was held and at 10 a.m. a lecture. Some of the titles of lectures were:

'An Approach to the Great Reality' (Mr. J. Perkins, Vice-President of the Society).

'Living the Life' (Mrs. D. Audin, France).

'Yoga through Sound' (Mrs. B. Nyssen, General Secretary, Belgium).

'Silence and Speech' (Dr. C. Bernades, Portugal).

'Celtic Coins and Medals' (Mrs. M. Parnis-Larose, France).

'The Individual and Society' (Mrs. H. Sabatay, France).

These discussion groups met between 5 and 6 o'clock—sometimes continuing till 7 o'clock. In the evening slides were shown, discussions were held and there was one evening a talk by Mr. and Mrs. Perkins on service in the Theosophical Society.

I learned a great deal and at the same time experienced great joy. I think this was true of many members.

The atmosphere of the gathering was excellent—fraternal and fraternalising.

Along with members from France and Belgium there was a large group from Spain, as well as some Italians and on Portuguese—unfortunately only two Swiss. BERNICE ARNOLD: Geneva.

GERMAN REGIONAL SUMMER SCHOOL

Under the chairmanship of Mrs. Claire Wyss about eighty members from Switzerland, Austria, Germany, Yugoslavia, France and Holland met at Pöchl, Austria, last September, amid beautiful mountain scenery and in sunny weather.

Lectures were given by Austrian and German members, and also by Mrs. Mary Lind, the chairman of the Pöchl Local Society in Germany, and by Madame Hermine Sabatay of Paris. In the evenings five discussion groups met on the following subjects: The work of the Theosophical Society in the coming years; The life, teachings and significance of Krishnamurti from the present theosophical standpoint; Yoga for theosophists—yes or no?; Pacifism; and Matters of Psychic Hygiene.

HUIZEN CENTRE

Last July Summit Rakemal Asscholt opened the new Besant Hall in a ceremony at which the Vice-President of the Society, the Burgomaster of Naarden and more than 200 others were present. It consists of a large hall seating 250 people, with a stage, a library, two smaller rooms for meetings, a kitchen, etc. The Society in England has given a beautiful portrait of Dr. Besant.

There are still debts on the Hall, for which further donations are needed, as well as for building more accommodation for visitors. This is necessary to hold future programmes, which include regular courses and seminars for training students and workers. One such seminar will take place from 25th May to 11th June next, conducted by Mr. Geoffrey Hudson in English.

(Continued from page 3)

man. What man needs... is knowledge of his own true nature, of how to live in relation to his fellow beings, in relation to all things, the attitude of mind or the spirit needed to bring him to that peace and happiness for which he ever strives.

Our main task is to show the way to that condition within himself which, once attained, will put an end to his restlessness, insecurity and confusion.

L.H.L.S.